THE LADY OR THE JANITOR? WHICH— TELLS THE TRUTH?

THE LADY.

He tells lies.

He is disagreeable, surly, mean, autocratic and inhuman.

He drinks.

He is always looking for fees.

He takes things that do not belong to him.

He plays the spy.

He is never about when wanted.

THE JANITOR.

She blames me for everything that goes wrong in the house.

She is fussy, troublesome, changeable, unreasonable, unfair, inhuman, unappreciative and quarrelsome.

She wants a janitor to be a jack-of-all-trades.

She makes a slave of me.

FROM the old and rickety tenements on the east side, where several janitors were awarded prizes for the excellent condition of their domain, to the brand new and fashionable apartment on the upper west side, this old question of the rights of tenant and janitor is again being agitated.

Much is to be said on both sides, but the general opinion is that the keeper of a flat is little short of an autocrat. What despot wearing the purple and fine linen of royalty; what tyrant glittering with the jewels of an Indian potentate; what genius, saint or god of beauty, after all, inspires a fraction of the fear and humble submission yielded this blue jeaned ruler of a city flat?

He permits his little kingdom to live in peace or makes them exist in diabolic turmoil, according to his mood, and all the time the victims dare not rise up and call him names.

There he sits, this real autocrat of our metropolitan homes, in his throne room down in the subterranean regions of an apartment house, and from that place his power ascends to the very roof, reaching out like the tentacles of an octopus and gripping the hearthstone of every home above him.

Never for an instant do the dwellers in a flat forget their real lord and master. Sometimes the owner figures in their life in an uncertain way, in the granting of special concessions perhaps, which are usually downright necessities, and he is apt to turn up on rent days, too, but at all other times he is as unreal as the fulfilment of his representative's suave promises.

Everybody who has lived in a city flat—and who among us has not?—knows too well the reversed relations existing between tenants and janitor. Novices are not long in finding them out. Almost before family trunks have disgorged the lares and penates and the great empty shells have been lowered to those mysterious regions sacred to his janitorship does the newcomer take his first lesson in flat tyranny, that you dare not call your soul your own—much less suggest a convenient corner for the storing of your belongings—in the presence of this supreme individual. That is, of course, if he be the ordinary janitor. Most janitors are ordinary, notwithstanding their assumption of extraordinary powers, and it is this class now under discussion.

The Human Buffer.

Of course there are janitors and janitors, and besides this undeniable condition that confronts us there are two sides to every question. The specific charges laid at the door of the flat dweller seem to be counterbalanced by an equal number of complaints festooning the portal of the flat ruler, and yet most of us agree that the janitor has decidedly the better of it.

His is no insignificant kingdom, this one ruled by the human buffer between landlord and tenant.

Take an average apartment house, which accommodates from thirty to fifty families, and the number of individuals housed beneath its roof will run up to three or four times these figures, and all, so far as their creature comforts are concerned, under the absolute power of the janitor. The very lives of these persons are held in the hollow of his grimy hand. With a manner that would do credit to an uncivilized monarch the janitor can render human existence perfectly intolerable, or, at least, barely endurable, for upward of three hundred beings. And the exasperating part of it is there is so little chance to get back at him.

Most flat dwellers have early been reduced to something amounting almost to servility in the hope of keeping down tyranny, but underneath this outward manner lies a hatred deep and everlasting, held in check only for the sake of peace and self-preservation.

To think that homes should be ruled by such a hand! Where is the leader so independent, where a monarch so absolute in his authority as the janitor of a New York flat?

Lives there a housekeeper with spirit so downtrodden that it cannot be stirred to tempestuousness by the mention of the janitor?

And lives there a janitor with feelings so callous to his own misdeeds that he is not ready to pour out his grievances?

Yet if all the housekeepers who have paid the tribute levied by these same despots of flats were ranged in a line on one side and all the janitors were placed opposite in a solid phalanx, and each side told its complaints against the other, where is the judge bold enough to decide the case, especially if he happens to owe some comfort in life to the blue jeaned tyrant?

Which are we to believe, the lady or the janitor?

Like Ananias.

"Our janitor tells lies," said our housekeeper, with rare boldness. "He lies about things that are lost, about what he is asked to do, about the landlord's promises, about everything. It's so much easier for him to lie than tell the truth that he's contracted the habit.

"We might endure this little way of his if only he were agreeable. When you miss the coal or wood you have bought, or a trunk cannot be found just as you are ready to start off for the summer; if a bicycle disappears or your wine gives out unexpectedly; if the cream doesn't arrive three mornings out of the week; if the change that should come from a bill is short or must be handed over to his majesty as a perquisite of office—when these things happen, not once, but many times, day after day, you begin to think that in addition to being a liar the janitor might reasonably be styled a thief and a blackguard.

"Besides deserving all these epithets he takes a keen delight, so it would seem, in freezing everybody during the cold weather. Why, last winter we found that the janitor and landlord had entered into a pleasant little scheme whereby the tenants were deprived of heat so as to help fill the pockets of both.

"Said the former to his hired bully, 'Go light on the coal, and if you can manage to save a ton a month I'll divide the price of it with you,' which was no small sum when the cost of red ash was up and the mercury was down.

"The janitor was stimulated by this scheme to make as much as he could, at the expense of our comfort, and after a while he began to abuse the arrangement by trying to run the house with almost no heat at all.

"It's a system of blackguardism that tenants ought not to put up with, but how are they going to help it? If we complain to the landlord, then the janitor gets back at us in some new, mean and disagreeable trick, and experience has taught him how to keep solid with the owner.

His Wife His Deputy

"Some of the janitors have a convenient way of disappearing from the premises during the day and leaving the care of the house to their wives, who are not capable of doing the work, even if they know how, which they do not, as a rule."

"The feeing system in hotels is nothing," said another irate tenant, "compared with the way money is extorted from us by the janitors, who insist upon bringing up every package that is delivered, and do the next thing to demanding a liberal reward for their undesired attention.

"Many of the janitors drink," she continued, "and if they happen to be in charge of a house not often visited by the landlord or agent, they neglect to clean the premises properly. Halls and windows are left in bad condition, the brass does not get polished, the shades look slovenly, door knobs fall off, garbage cans are permitted to stand around in all their uncleanliness and unsightliness from one morning to the next, and the whole house takes on an air more in keeping with the east side tenements than even middle class flats."

These are a few of the delinquencies ascribed to the janitor and gathered from several sources, yet it would be unfair to say that all janitors are deserving the reputation and objections given them in the above cases. Some, indeed, receive the highest praise, and, besides, there is the other side to the story.

THE JANITOR MUST BE A GAS EXPERT AS WELL AS A PLUMBER

ELEVATOR BELLS OUT OF ORDER: A GREAT SOURCE OF ANNOYANCE.

GETTING THE GARBAGE OUT OF THE WAY BEFORE THE TENANTS ARE UP

THE JANITOR AND HIS FAMILY AFTER THE DAY'S WORK IS OVER.

"I've had eighteen years' experience as a janitor," remarked a colored employe at an apartment house of the middle class, "and in all that time I've found that it's the ladies that give the most trouble, but then," he added, cheerfully, "I expect that.

"Fortunately, the landlord of this house happens to be a very reasonable man, and if any complaints are made I can usually explain them satisfactorily. You see, ladies want so much attention, and then they're so changeable, that if we didn't learn just how to handle them things would be far from easy for us.

"We have to tell a few lies," he admitted, with a grin. "If we didn't we couldn't keep our places a minute. The landlord usually tells us to make certain promises, and it isn't our fault if he doesn't keep them, is it? We're not the inhuman wretches some people call us, but we can't be doing everything the women want. They're so unreasonable, too.

"Now the other day one of the tenants here sent down word that she wanted her trunk taken up stairs, because she had to pack it and catch a train inside of an hour. Just because I couldn't drop the work I was doing, go to the storeroom and fish her luggage out from among a hundred other trunks, she missed her train, at least that's what she said, and she came near getting us all into trouble over that old trunk."

"I tell you, we janitors have to be diplomatic," said the lord of another flat, with a visible swelling of pride at the requisites of his position. "If we were not diplomats we couldn't handle the ladies properly.

"The big complaints do not bother me so much," confided another flat dictator, "but the little naggings and fussiness over the trivial things are what makes our lives anything but pleasant. The other day I got the greatest calling down, and all on account of a little difficulty about admitting a caller.

My Lady Was "Out."

"The lady gave orders that no one was to be admitted to her apartment, and visitors as well as callers on the telephone were discreetly informed she was out. The next day she launched at me with more complaints than any landlord would listen to, all because I didn't happen to know that a certain few persons were not included in the order given me.

"They're always fussing, too, the ladies are, and grumbling about the entrance hall, or about somebody's rubber plants being in the way, or the elevator boy not answering promptly. The janitor," he confided in a low voice, "gets the best insight into feminine dispositions and character. You'd be surprised to see how some of the meekest looking ladies will flare up and storm when they get into a temper. It's all so foolish, too, and it's hard on us.

"The ladies have a notion that janitors ought to know how to mend everything about the house. If the gas stove breaks they send for us and demand to have it repaired at once. If the telephone or door bells get out of order or if the plumbing leaks, up we must go to make it right or there will be trouble.

"When you remember that there are thirty families to look after, with thirty times these disorders liable to happen in the course of a few days, you can get some idea of what we have to do in addition to the regular routine of janitor work.

"After all, we are human, and if the ladies would be a little more considerate things would be easier all around, and if instead of looking upon us as thieves, blackguards and liars they would treat us as human beings there would not be this everlasting wrangle between the lady and the janitor."

The Parson's Donation.

The parson's donation, I've been there before;
Years, years ago, sonny; I've been there once more.
The parson's donation is not the same thing
As it was years ago in the autumn or spring.
In the autumn 'twas beans that were ancient and old;
In the spring it was turnips bewhiskered with mould.
But the parson, you know, was a man who had fun
On a salary, sir, you would toss over, son.

Two hundred per year was the stipend he'd reap
For hauling out souls from the uttermost deep;
And the farmers who gave it were thinking, you know,
Of cutting it fifty or sixty below.
They said, "He don't dig in the soil, and it's tough
For us workers to hand out so much of the stuff."

I'll not say a word of discomforts he met
At funerals, marriages, sleet, cold or wet;
I'll not say a word of the times he has had
Rolling over the roads that were rutty and bad.
He'd haste to the bed of a poor dying man,
In the rain, or he'd go to the marital ban.
And earned his two hundred? You'd better believe
He earned it—and laughed up his poor ravelled sleeve.

His wife and six little ones stood close around
When the parson's donation hosannas made sound.
The tears that were shed by the chief mourners there
Fell on his white face from their hearts of despair.
The rich farmers twiddled their thumbs and were chill
In their pews as they murmured, "It is the Lord's will."
Then the poor parson's coffin went under the sod,
But his soul long before had appealed to his God.

HORACE SEYMOUR KELLER.

How Eva Halliday, Deaf, Dumb and Blind, Was Lifted Out of Darkness.

Little Girl Who Knew Only Eight Signs Now Uses a Typewriter.

THE wonderful progress made in the education of the deaf, dumb and blind girl, Eva Halliday, a pupil in the Wisconsin School for the Deaf, continues to interest all who have heard of the affliction of the girl and the methods taken to reach her bright mind and to lift her out of darkness into light.

For the remarkable success in a very short time, the pupil is indebted to her patient and efficient teacher, Miss Hypatia Boyd, herself totally deaf and partly bereft of speech.

In four months the child was taught 125 words and sentences. To-day she is not only able to read and write Braille, but she cleverly operates an ordinary typewriting machine.

Miss Halliday was born with none of the afflictions from which she is seeking and finding relief. They were the result of an attack of catarrhal fever when she was but six years of age. She is now about sixteen. The girl's parents lived in Wausau, Wis., and were without means with which to undertake her education. Her condition was brought to the notice of the superintendent of the school for the deaf, the province of which does not include the teaching of the blind, but the sympathy of Superintendent Cary was aroused to such an extent that he made a personal appeal to the Board and was allowed to receive her at the school.

Teacher and pupil were thrown together by accident, and this is one of the interesting features of the story. Some time previous Miss Hypatia Boyd, of Milwaukee, who was deaf and had only a limited power of speech, applied to the institution for permission to enter for the purpose of learning how to teach the deaf and dumb. It is not the function of the school to impart this class of education, but finally an arrangement was made by which she was allowed to do as she wished.

Being endowed with a wonderful amount of energy, she entered enthusiastically on the course that was especially prepared for her. Soon after this, the sad condition of the Wausau girl was brought to the notice of the superintendent, and he at once decided to take her in and place her in the care of Miss Boyd.

This was in February, 1902. At the time that she entered the institution the girl knew only eight signs that to her veiled mind indicated anything. To illustrate, the blowing of the breath over the back of her hand was taken to mean that she was about to take a railway trip, and this was but one of several unique methods adopted to reach her mind.

The child's education began by the use of the manual alphabet generally, but particularly by any means by which it was thought best to convey the meaning of words and things. From the first the child seemed to be strangely drawn to her teacher, who would take her delicate hand in her own, and by the arrangement of the fingers, sundry patting and clapping, signs were spelled into her mind.

A box of objects would be spread out on the table. The blind girl would take up one of them and be allowed to feel it over and over again. Then Miss Boyd would spell the name of the object into the hand of her charge. Several other objects would be similarly treated, when the girl would commence over again and spell back the signs, showing that she understood what she held in her hand.

By artifices of her own, Miss Boyd was able to impart the rudiments of an education. For instance, the child was taught to understand that the touch of the hand on the cheek signified "good," and by raising the arm of the pupil and pulling it forward with several up and down motions the idea of "running" was conveyed. She has a sign to indicate the presence of certain other girls, the sense of touch and smell aiding her in this respect.

Practically all of this work was accomplished in the first four months that she remained in the institution. Speaking of the progress of her pupil, Miss Boyd said:—

"I can never forget the beautiful change that came to her countenance when she was freed from her prison. At first her thoughts, as reflected in her face, were of an indescribably sad and pathetic nature, but from the day that I taught her her first word she began to look out on the world with an affection, an intelligence, and even a keen sense of joy that did one's heart good to see. And it is this and other things that convince me that Eva has a mission to fulfil in this world. In a way that I cannot find words to describe she awakens all that is sweet and noble in human nature, and gives to those who come in contact with her a strength and courage productive of much good, especially in overcoming obstacles and difficulties. Her happiness never leaves her. I believe she is the happiest child that I have ever seen. It is a real pleasure to see her day after day enter my school room and feel around until she finds her teacher, and then, throwing her hands about my neck, cling to me in the way that must bring tears to the eyes."

An element in the better fortune of the girl is that she has enlisted the earnest sympathy of a well known and wealthy Pennsylvanian, whose work for the deaf and dumb has spread to many fields. This philanthropist is Dr. William Wade, of Oakmont. Dr. Wade sent her a watch, by which she was able to read the time, and he also provided her with a Braille writer, the use of which she has thoroughly mastered. He also presented her with a tandem bicycle, on which teacher and pupil have spent hours in exercise and rare enjoyment.

Miss Boyd has on several occasions taken the child to Milwaukee, and once when they were on the train returning to Delavan the pupil surprised her teacher by telling her of her experience before she had known a teacher.

She writes on an ordinary typewriting machine, finding the keys by the touch, doing good work in spelling and forming sentences. She has also learned how to operate a sewing machine and to do a variety of needlework. She goes walking and shopping, and is able to identify many of the attaches of the institution by feeling a button, a finger ring, by the sense of touch or smell.

PHOTO BY TAYLOR

EVA HALLIDAY AND HER TEACHER.

PROFESSIONAL.

The manicure's no literary man;
He gives no thought to diction or to style,
And yet there's much of polish in his plan,
And, too, he lives by labor of the file.

N. M. L.

Diary of a Summer Boarder.

MONDAY.—Maybe I wasn't tired last night when I got here! This is certainly a great place. The air is fine. I took a long ramble to-day and felt myself getting better every moment. It seems a thousand years since I left home. The way I feel at present I never want to see it again. The country is certainly great.

Tuesday.—I had my pillow changed to-day for a larger one. Even that isn't quite right, but it will do. I half wish I had my mattress here, but it doesn't matter much. The table is really good. I expect I shall grow fat. To-day I rowed in a boat for the first time. It was splendid exercise. I can sleep on anything to-night.

Wednesday.—I must get down to dinner earlier. I was late last night and didn't get much to eat. But it was my own fault, of course. Everything was cold, too. The fact is, they have too many people in the dining room and not enough waiters. But then this is the crowded season. I met a lot of people to-day. I can't quite make up my mind yet whether they are interesting or uninteresting.

Thursday.—I was bored to death to-day by a decayed authoress, also a chap with diamond rings. Last night they had a dance and I got mixed up in it somehow. I guess my dancing days are over. The worst of it was I couldn't sleep after midnight for the noise. That infernal bed is bad enough in itself.

Friday.—This is doing me a world of good, no doubt, but I long for a good square meal. I miss my daily bath, too. I also feel like being alone, instead of being bored to death. Still, I mustn't complain. The change is a great thing.

Saturday.—I got weighed to-day. Found I had lost two pounds. No wonder. I have had all the country I want. I would like to know how business is. The office will seem good. But I mustn't dream.

Sunday.—Thank God, I'm going home! Home, sweet home! Wait till I get in my own little bed. Wait till I sit down at my own table. In a few more hours I'll be there. Oh, sweet home, I'll never leave thee again!

TOM MASSON.

A Crooked Path.

A disdainful flamingo once said
To a parrot, in accents ill bred:—
"'Tis plain to be seen
That you're painfully green,
While I am extremely well read."
Said the parrot:—"I notice you pose
As stilted and proud of your clothes;
But you can't polly-vous,
Not a thing can you do
But follow the bent of your nose."